Safeguarding of Taj Mahal

145. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Safeguarding Taj: Forces don't even have a decent patrol boat" which appeared in the Hindustan Times dated the 7th January, 2002;

(b) whether non-availability of a decent boat and non-working of spotlights on the back wall of the Taj are some of the handicaps for safeguarding the historical monument especially during night; and

(c) if so, what steps have been taken to remove these hurdles?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) to (c) As per information furnished by the district police authorities Agra, regular patrol boats have not been provided on account of insufficient water in the Yamuna.

The Agra Development Authority has provided adequate number of flood-lights along the rear wall of Taj Mahal which are functioning.

Additional security and river patrolling is provided for the security of Taj Mahal on special occasions and also during rainy seasons by the State Police.